The TAHRIK-I-JADID

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Editor : NASEEM SAIFI

Alhaji Mukhtar Sarkin Bai, Kano State Commissioner for Education, receiving a copy of Holy Quran with translation and short notes, from Mr. R. A. Saqib, Principal of the Ahmadiyya Secondary School, Kano. Mr. Saqib is seen explaining some points to the Commissioner. The occasion was the Commissioner's visit to the school on 10th of December, 1971.

مکرم رفیق احمد صاحب ثاقب پرنسپل احمدیہ سکول کانو کمشنر صاحب ایجوکیشن کو قرآن کریم (مع ترجمہ اور تفسیری نوٹس) ھدیۃ پیش کر کے اس کے بعض مقامات کی تشریح کر رہے ھیں

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

MONTHLY

Tahrik-i-Jadid

RABWAH

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OPEN YOUR EYES

The Promised Messiah, peace be on him, says :

O ye the people ! Let it be made clear to you that a man has been sent to support and uphold religion but you have not recognised him. Here is he, in your midst, and he is the same person who is addressing you. But there are heavy curtains on your eyes. Had your hearts been eager to seek after the truth, it would not have been difficult for you to test the person who claims that God converses with him. Come to that person and stay with him, two to three weeks so that, if God so wishes, you might witness the blessings that are raining on him and the glittering heavenly revelation that he is receiving. He who seeks, is the person who finds. Only for him is opened who knocks. If you close your eyes and hide yourself in a dark room and then begin to question the existence of the sun, your complaint will certainly be meaningless. O ye the ignorant person ! open your eyes and the door of your room so that you may see the sun—nay it (the sun) may enlighten you with its light.

This passage has been taken from a book of the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, called "Fath Islam" (the Victory of Islam).

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KHUTBA

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HOLY QURAN
IS A GREAT GUIDANCE AND A PERFECT LAW

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III
recited the following verses of the Holy Quran

و قال الرسول یرب ان قومی اتخذوا هذا القرآن مهجورا (الفرقان)

And the Messenger will say, 'O my Lord, my people indeed treated this Qur'an as a discarded thing.' 25 : 31

و ما من دابة فی الارض و لا طئر یطیر بجناحیه الا امم امثالکم مافرطنا فی الکتب من شیی ثم الی ربهم یحشرون (الانعام)

There is not an animal that crawls in the earth, nor a bird that flies on its two wings, but they are communities like you. We have left out nothing in the Book. Then to their Lord shall they be gathered together. 6:39

and said "I have already delivered a few Khutbas on the subject that the Holy Quran is a great guidance and a perfect law. The Holy Quran has itself claimed to be great and of an exalted position and it has brought forth proof to support this claim of its. But despite the fact that it is a great book there is a large number of people and even a large portion of the Muslim nation who have cut themselves off from the Holy Quran. Neither these people lay a claim to its adherence nor do they show this, through their deeds.

The verse which I have just recited—it is a small part of the full verse—makes mention of another greatness of the Holy Quran. It not only makes mention of the greatness, it also puts forward a proof of this claim. God says there was nothing basic to the needs of human beings which He did not know and the Holy Quran did not mention it. Since this book had to mention and fulfil the needs of human beings till the doomsday and it had to provide guidance for everyone in all the circumstances and it was also to give such teaching to the world that could take the people back to their Creator thus strengthening relations with God, that is why such a book it has been made. The small part of the verses of Suratul Anaam which I have recited makes reference to that I have said above.

However the century in which the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be upon him, was raised was quite different from the century in which the industrial revolution was to take place or the century in which the agricultural changes have been brought about and new methods of agriculture have been introduced. That is why it was not necessary that a detailed knowledge of the needs of these latter centuries be given to the people of the first century; they were definitely given the knowledge of the needs of their own time.

As a matter of principle I do believe that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be upon him, was given the knowledge of the needs of the ages to come and that is why when we study the sayings of the Holy Prophet we find that whatever Science has told us in this age, was one way or the other referred to in the sayings of the Holy Prophet.

(Here Huzur cited the instance of the scientific research about the use of the tooth brush and the dental paste. The Holy Prophet has emphasised the use of Miswak (chewing stick) and it fulfils the need for the brush as well as the toothpaste.)

In short, the claim of the Holy Quran that instructions about every need of human beings have been mentioned in it is indeed a great claim. But in order to understand this claim fully we must realise that the needs of the people of the first century were quite different from the needs of the people of the second century and so forth and so on. The needs of the people who lived two hundred years ago were very different from our needs. A revolution was taking place two hundred years ago and this was the revolution of capitalism. This no doubt was a human revolution and it had a number of shortcomings and as the time passed its shortcomings (or let us say, its bad points) continued increasing. But there is no denying the fact that it was a great revolution. It was during this revolution that the aeroplanes came into existence and the railway trains also went into action. The sea travel was also made easy and the telegraphic messages could be transmitted from one place to the other. Hence it was a great revolution that helped mankind living in far off places to come closer like the people of a family. And in future it is going to bring them still closer. When all these things will be under the sway of Islam, they will prove still more useful.

Huzur further remarked that the people could understand the problems of their own time and therefore we should not waste time in pondering over the problems which will face mankind 500 years from now. This also proves, he said, that in every age there must be some godly inspired people who should guide mankind in the solution of the problems, for, these problems can in no way be solved with human intelligence alone. That is why God says:

"None but only the purified people can touch it (the Holy Quran)"

Which in other words means that nobody can really understand and make full use of the Holy Quran except those who are inspired by God and are purified by Him.

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In the end Huzur said: There are some young people who seem to be very much impressed and influenced by the worldly movements. They should not worry in the least. They should try to realise that God has made them the leaders and the teachers of the world. They are not to learn from others nor have they to beg anyone. They need not stretch their hands before others. I say to the youth of the Community that you have been raised in this age to guide the world. It is the world that is going to gain something from you. You do nct understand this position of yours but I know it quite well .. You will give the world what the capitalist, Communist and Socialist revolutions have not been able to give.

In the end he prayed that God may enable all of us to shoulder our responsibilities to the best of our abilities.

Ijtema, Khuddamul Ahmadiyya

The Annual Ijtema of the Khuddamul Ahmadiyya (Central) was held on the 5th, 6th and 7th of October. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III addressed the audience on the first and the last day of the Ijtema.

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In his opening addess Hazrat Khalifatul Masih told all the Khuddam to get the scarf and the ring which had been made for them and which were expected to be of great use on various occasions. The scarf is made of white and black piece of cloth, for these were the colours the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be upon him, used for his banners The ring is made of plastic and costs very little amount.

Huzur also told the audience that the scarfs had also been devised for the Lajna Imaullah and instructed the Ansarullah to do the same for their members.

Next, Huzur remarked that some people were disturbed on the Government taking over the schools whereas he felt that it was something quite good. "The schools and the colleges do not impart the whole of education" he said, "in fact what they teach is less than even one tenth of what education should be. Huzur told the audience that it was essential for everyone to understand how real education could be obtained. And then he dilated on the process of receiving education. He said, "The knowledge that we acquire must be used as the basis of our thinking and pondering over things around us. The result of this thinking process must be utilised in the workshop of intellect, and the result of this, should again go under the category of knowledge. This is like a circle and unless it is completed and one circle follows another and the process continues it cannot be said that the knowledge we acquire is of any value at all." "The same thing he said, "must happen in the spiritual world. There also we have to pass through a circle before it can be said that we know and benefit from the spiritual world". Here he said the circle was formed by Faith, God realisation and appropriate actions. One followed the other and when the circle was completed it came to the starting point once again and again started moving to complete the circle.

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih exhorted all the Ahmadi youth to bring the people of the whole world with love and affection; to the path that leads to the love of God. "There would come lot of difficulties," he said, "while doing this, but this is something worth doing and it must be done." Huzur said that he had a great burning desire to see the Ahmadi youth obtain the position and status for which they had been created. He wished very much that all of them made the fullest use of their capacities and through prayers and right effort they achieved true faith, and God realisation and thus enabled themselves to witness the most beau-

tiful manifestations of God and also made the other people see these manifestations.

The address was brought to a close with a silent prayer.

On the last day Huzur read some verses of the Sura Teen (Chapter No. 95) and commented upon them. He remarkad that this chapter made mention of four revolutions in the religious and spiritual world, starting from Hazrat Adam and finishing on the person of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be upon him. The symbol of the first revolution he said was Teen and it began with Hazrat Adam. All the prophets who appeared in the world during the period between Hazrat Adam and Hazrat Noah supported this revolution and tried all they could, to make it a success while at the same time they prepared the people for the next revolution as well. This first revolution was meant to make Adam and the generations to follow realise what sin means and it was exposed that there was some inelination towards sin—symbolised as the nakedness—and advice was administered to them to get rid of sin or in other words to cover up their nakedness. If they did not do that they were told, they could be committing sin and thus be deprived of the achievement of the goal of life.

This revolution had three distinct features. First, the Satan was given respite to do whatever he could to make the revolution unsuccessful. He was not reprimanded for tuis, at that time, as he was, in the days of the next revolution. In other words, God declared that He would make this revolution successful without arresting the activities of the Satan. Second, the guidance that Adam was granted though basically meant for the uplift of the spiritual aspect of human life, laid more stress on human social affairs than anything else. Third, the material needs were looked after in such a way that there could be no hatred resulting from the distribution of human inhabitation.

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The second revolution mentioned in this Chapter of the Holy Quran was started by Hazrat Noah and Zaitun has been mentioned as its symbol. The distinctive feature of this revolution was that God told Satan that he could be given respite only upto a certain extent. That is, if the Satan wanted to turn the godly people away from the right path and annihilate them, God would not permit that. It is said that Noah, during the deluge, saw a dove flying by the side of his Ark which was holding a twig of olive in its beak. Noah immediately thought of two things : (i) the land is somewhere near and he will be able to make it his inhabitation, for the dove cannot fly but a few miles distance, (ii) that there is olive on this land.

This revolution took humanity a step forward and thus prepared the people for the third revolution which was to take place at the hands of Moses. The prophets who appeared after Noah upto the time of Moses (Moses excluding) had to support this second revolution and to prepare the people for the third one. This revolution resulted in the scattering of humanity in various places ; before this, all the people lived together in one area.

The third revolution was brought about by Moses and its effects continued till the time of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be upon him. Its symbol was Tur-i-seeneen. Its distinctive features were i) The followers of Moses were stronger than their opponents, ii) the people who had scattered during the days of Noah. had by now, become different nations and a sense of nationalism had developed in them, iii) one

nation of the days of Noah had now become multi-nation and started trying to go ahead of others, thus opposing one another.

The fourth revolvtion Hazrat Khalifatul Masih said was caused in the world through the Holy Prophet Mohammad, peace and blessings of God be upon him, and this was the very revolution for which the previous three revolutions had prepared the people. It was indeed a great revolution in the material as well as the spiritual world, for, through this revolution the mundane affairs and the spiritual affairs had been merged together, so much so that one can visualise it easily in the prayer *Rabbana Aatina fiddunya hasantan wa fil aakhirati hasanatan.* The main object of this revolution was that the world may be filled with the idea of the oneness of God, as the sea is filled with water.

All these four revolutions are really linked with four attributes of God ment oned in the Suratul Fatiha. These four attributes are i) Rabubiyyat, ii) Rahmaniyyat, iii) Rahimiyyat, iv) Malikiyyat-i-Yaumiddin.

Having dilated on these four revolutions, Huzur remarked that there were also going to take place four revolutions in the latter days. Three had already taken place viz. the revolution of Capitalism, the revolution of Communism and the revolution of Socialism (of the People's Republic of China) and these three revolutions have been brought about to support the fourth one which is once again to be caused through the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be upon him, which of course means that under the leadership of his spiritual son, the Promised Messiah, peace be on him. During the revolution of Capitalism, new means of transport and communication were invented, industry was revolutionised the press came into existence. All these things were needed by the fourth revolution to be caused on Islamic lines. The revolution of communism, no doubt, attacked religion and refused to believe in God but it also destroyed a legion of the Orientalists (who always thought of attacking Islam from all sides) The revolution of socialism (of (China) is very different from that of capitalism. Although the leaders of this revolution did not believe in God but they told the people to act upon *La Ikraha fiddin* (there is no compulsion in the matters of religion). The revolutionaries of socialism told the people of China that they could own any belief and act accoring to it. In other words, the communism accepted and acknowleded the first two out of the four basic attributes and laid so much stress on them that West started admitting that Russia had excelled them in many fields. Socialism went a step farther and acknowledged that they could not make any progress without paying heed to good morals. that really shows that sociali m has taken the human mind a step farther and has invited the attention of the people to the need for morals. That is what clearly shows that all these three revolutions were meant to support the fourth revolution which is going to take place in the near future and which is going to be based on Islamic values.

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Huzur further remarked that as he had said before, God had caused revolutions to prepare for the fourth one to come earlier and to be succesful. These three revolutions have brought humanity to a stage where the spiritual kingdom could take it into its grip. He told the audience that what was required of them was that they should join the forces of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be upon him, for an aggressive spiri-

tual attack. The weapons that this Force has been given are all spiritual and they consist of the Quranic guidance and the Quranic light. He said, "You should ponder over the Holy Quran and taking the hints of guidance from it, you should move forward. There should be unity of thought and correct results should be obtained through prayers to God. You have to give the message of equality of mankind, to everyone. In fact you should not - and you cannot - have comfortable sleep unless you have done your duty. You have to work for it, not for months but for years. Make Taqwa (the fear of God) your shield. You must realise that it is Taqwa that has been made a shield for the Forces that you have to join against the enemy. If you ever indulged in pride and self centredness this shield will not avail you anything. Take this shield and attack the whole world. If you are sincere in becoming a soldier of the Forces of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be upon him, you should make a pledge here and now that according to the command and warning of the Holy Quran in the words *Lau araadoo al-khrooja la-addoo lahoo uddatun* 9 : 46 you have to put up a fight and you have to prepare yourself for it. Everybody who wants to become a soldier is required to have the qualities of a soldier."

Huzur ended his speech with a long collective silent prayer.

OBITUARY

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Chaudhri Abdur Rahman of the United Kingdom passed away on the 8th of October in London. He was 62.

Chaudhri Sahib was educated and brought up at Qadian where his father, Chaudhri Ghulam Mohammad, was Manager of the Nusrat High School for Girls. Later, he worked for some time in East Africa before going to the United Kingdom. Though he was employed elsewhere he worked for the Mission for long hours every day and also assisted in the editing of the Muslim Herald for which he contributed many useful articles.

His janaza was flown to Rabwah and the janaza prayer was led by Hazrat Khalifa-tul-Masih on Friday the 13th of October after the Asr prayer. The burial took place, under the special instructions of Huzur, in the graveyard for the martyrs (Maqbarai Shuhada).

Chaudhri Sahib leaves behind two sons and two daughters and a widow. We of the Tahrik-i-Jadid send our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family and to the Jamaat in the U.K. which has suffered the loos of a very sincere and hard working member. May his soul rest in peace and may the Almighty Lord grant patience to the members of his family. Amen.

MARRIAGE

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Sahibzada Mirza Munawar Ahmad, Chief Medical Officer, Fazl-i-Omar Hospital, gave his daughter in marriage to Dr. Hamidullah Khan of Peshawar on the 6th of October. The Nikah was performed by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih immediately before the Friday Sermon.

Huzur, in his Khutba of Nikah, said, "I am going to announce the Nikah of my very dear child who is as dear to me as my own children and is the daughter of my younger brother, Mirza Munawar Ahmad ; her name is Amatul Haye.

"This announcement is being made after very long and fervent prayers. None of the members of the family of the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, is more honourable than any other member of the Jamaat and this also is an undisputable fact that everybody has to carry his or her own burden. But the fact is that the burden that has been placed on the shoulders of the members of the family of the Promised Messiah, is much greater than the burden placed on the shoulders of any other Ahmadi. Thus it can be said that the responsibilities of the members of the family of the Promised Messiah are also much greater than those of others and therefore the probabilities of the anger of God for them are also more than others and they stand in need of asking for forgiveness more than others. Of course I must repeat that the honour and respect of any of them is in no way greater than the other Ahmadis. He who is not an Ahmadi and does not give due respect to a brother of his, is, as we believe, to be questioned by God but an Ahmadi, man or woman, who does not pay due respect to an Ahmadi man or woman from among his or her relatives, he or she is definitely more guilty in the sight of God. God has caused such a river of brotherhood and love to flow throgh Islam that its width is very great and its water continues to increase evert moment.

"Responsibilities are great and the love of God must be won, I, therefore, request the friends to pray that He may enable this our dear child to relise the responsibilities and to fulfil them in the best possible manner. May He also enable the bridegroom (who belongs to a very sincere family of Peshawar) to understand his responsibilities and to fulfil them to the best of his abilities.

"It is with these prayers and with the determination that I will continue to pray for the two of them and with this hope that all the friends will remember them in their prayers I now announce the Nikah."

The Holy Quran

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Commenting upon a verse of the Holy Quran which runs thus :

والذين اذا انفقوا لم يسرفوا و لم يقتروا

و كان بين ذالك قواما

Hazrat Khalifa-tul-Masih II says : Thes days people spend more than what they have the financial power to spend, on the occasions of marriages, for ornaments with a view to preserving their prestige. The consequences are never pleasant for they have to borrow money and later on find it difficult to repay the loan. Of course if some one has got plentifully, it is not forbidden for him to spend (although he also should remain within his bounds). But he who has not got enough of money with him, if he borrows money that he cannot repay easily, his spending more than what he should, will be regarded as extravagance.

This also should not be lost sight of that extravagance changes shapes. If somebody is earning three to four thousand rupees per month and he puts on clothes which cost him fifteen to twenty rupees per yard, or he gets six to seven suits prepared, it would not be called extravagance. But if the members of his family fall ill, God forbid, and he calls in the Doctors who tell him to buy very expensive medicines and thus he has to spend more than half of his income on these medicines and still he does not decrease his expenses on food and clothing, it will be unjustified and it will be called extravagance ; though ordinarily it would not have been so. The fact is that whenever more has to be spent on any one item as compared with the other item and we do not cut down our expenses on one item to enable ourselves to spend more on the other, it will be called extravagance to spend the same amount as we had been spending before. In this age, for example, we need millions and millions of rupees for the preaching of Islam. We could hear voices from various parts of the world asking for more people to be sent to them to teach them Islam ; they are also asking for more of literature which can remove their doubts. If any member of our Community does not cut down his expenses on food and clothing and does not spare money for the preaching of Islam, his spending on food and clothing will be considered as extravagant spending, though ordinarily it would not be so. That is why I have inaugurated the scheme of Tahrik-i-Jadid and told the members of the Jamaat to take only one dish at a time and those who have a few suits of clothes should not prepare more clothes.

The Hadith

Hazrat Abu Musa Ash'ari, may God be pleased with him, reports the following Hadith from the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God by upon him : "A Muslim who is trustworthy and looks after the wealth of the Muslim (in order to keep it safe) and obeys the instruction that is given

to him and when some thing is given to him to keep as a trust, returns it (when it is time to do so) with a good heart, and gives it to whom he is told to give, he is like a man who gives money for charitable purposes."

These words of the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of God be upon him, call our attention to the fact that for the smooth running of a society it is vitally important that people should be trustworthy. He has actually equated the virtue of trustworthiness with charity.

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Holy Quran for all

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III has expressed his desire that the Holy Quran (with translations in various languages) be published in a large number—not less than a million copies—and it should be placed in the rooms of every big hotel in the world and also be given to every individual who is anxious to read the Holy Quran. For this purpose, Huzur has formed an organisation called Quran Publications Regd, Rabwah".

The Managing Governor of this Organisation has appealed to the Jamaat to work hard to achieve this objective. He has called upon the presidents and the Amirs of various branches of the Jamaat to ask their members to donate appreciable sums for the distribution of the Holy Quran. If every person gave one copy to one friend of his, he says, hundreds of thousands of copies of the Holy Quran could easily be placed in the hands of those who are in need of this Book.

At the First Annual Ijtema of the Khuddamul Ahmadiyya, Nigeria, Maulana Ajmal reports that more than one thousand copies have been earmarked for distribution. Some members have taken upon themselves to distribute as many as fifty copies to the hotels and to their friends.

If other Missions abroad could also do the same, rather excel what has been done at the First Annual Ijtema of the Khuddam in Nigeria, a large number of copies would be distributed in no time and in all the nooks and corners of the world. You may give your offer to the Missionary-in-charge or you may send it direct to Hazrat Khalifatul Masih, Rabwah.

Efficacy of prayer

Dr. Imtiaz Ahmad Chaudhri reports from Boajebu, Sierra-Leone that a child of two and a half years was brought to him with Status Asthmaticus; the child was almost at the verge of death. Treatment was administered to him and the relatives of the patient were told to bring him the next day again. Chaudhri Sahib was not very hopeful of the condition of the child but prayed to God very fervently that He may heal the child through His grace and mercy.

The next day the child was not brought to the clinic and this fact saddened the Doctor very much, for he thought the child must not have survived. But God is so good that a few days after that, the child came to the clinic walking and feeling much better. He was quite out of danger.

Another young man came with Hernial strangulation. He was also at the point of death. Immediate operation was the need of the time but since he developed another complication—Peritenitis—the urgency for the operation became still greater.

As soon as the preparations for the operation were complete, the patient collapsed and he could be brought to a state of consciousness only after great struggle. In this condition the operation became very dangerous and the relatives of the patient were not prepared to take him to any other Doctor or Hospital. Chaudhri Sahib (Dr. Imtiaz) went into seclusion and prayed to God for help and guidance and asked the Real and True Healer to heal the patient without operation.

Half an hour after that, the Doctor tried to push the hernial strangulation into the abdomen with his hands. Praise be to Allah, the patient was all right within two minutes.

This kind of things prove conclusively that God hears the prayers and also that He is with our Doctors who have dedicated their lives to serve humanity at the instance of the Spiritual Head of the Ahmadiyya Jamaat—Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III.

All praise is due to God, the Gracious the Merciful.

President Lincoln Dreamed His Death

There are few people who have not heard of Abraham Lincoln well known President of the United States of America in the 19th century. Shortly before his assassination he had a vivid dream which he related.

About ten days ago, I retired very late. I had been waiting for important dispatches...I soon began to dream. There seemed to be a deathlike stillness about me. Then I heard subdued sobs, as if a number of people were weeping. I thought I left my bed and wandered downstairs. There the silence was broken by the same pityful sobbing, but the mourners were invisible. I went from room to room. No living person was in sight, but the same mournful sounds of distress met me as I passed along.

It was light in all the rooms; every object was familiar to me, but where all the people who were grieving as if their hearts would break?

I was puzzled and alarmed. What could be the meaning of all this? Determined to find the cause of a state of affairs so mysterious, and so shocking, I kept on until I arrived in the East Room, which I entered. There I met with a sickening surprise. Before me was a catafalque (tomb) on which rested a corpse (dead person) in funeral vestments. Around it were stationed soldiers who were acting as guards; and there was a throng of people, some gazing mournfully upon the corpse, whose face was covered, others weeping pityfully.

"Who is dead in the White House?" I demanded of one of the soldiers.

"The President" was the answer. "He was killed by an assassin"

DO YOU HAVE A COPY OF "INVITATION" TO GIVE TO A FRIEND ?

ASK FOR IT FROM:

Managing Editor
Tahrik-i-Jadid, Rabwah.

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THIS IS CHRISTIANITY

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(Originally published in the Editorial columns of THE TRUTH from 24th of May to 28th of June, 1957 under the heading "Weak points of Christianity".

BY NASEEM SAIFI

IT is reported in a Section of the Daily Press that the Anglican Synod which ended its sittings in Lagos recently has decided on a four-point programme to combat the 'menace' of Islam. The Synod is reported to have called the progress of Islam an unwarranted intrusion and has resolved unanimously to check it. The four-point programme is :

1. Christian teaching of the Bible is to be encouraged.
2. Christian experts on Islam are to be invited to give instruction and simple lessons on Islam.
3. Open-air Christian meetings are to be held weekly in every parish on the 'weakness of Islam.'
4. Gospel tracts are to be printed and widely circulated.

We heartily welcome this programme and shall eagerly wait for its results. We of the Ahmadiyya Mission are justifiably proud of the fact that the 'menace of Islam' to which the Synod has hinted and which is so much feared by the Christians is spearheaded by our section of the Muslims. We are glad to have achieved some measure of success in our activities and we thank God for that, while we pray to Him that He may, out of His grace, enable us to bring this campaign to a successful conclusion. Our Open-air meetings which we are holding on Saturdays in various parts of Lagos have really gone a long way in educating the public about the differences between Islam and Christianity. Our recent publications like 'The Second Advent of Jesus Christ.' 'The Bible Leads to Him' and the 'Miracles of Jesus Christ' which have been circulated widely in Lagos and other parts of the country together with some other publications which we have presented to the public for sale viz, 'Mohammad and Christ' (a critical review of 'Christ or Mohammad' by S.C. Phillip), Your Questions Answered, Women in Islam and Rock of Faith have really created a happy stir. We say 'happy' because everybody is pleased to find the truth about Religion.

We have always held that Religion can be ta ked about in quite a happy mood without creating any acrimony or ill-feeling. After all, it is only a matter of difference of opinion and what sphere of life is that wherein we do not differ with one another. There is nothing in the world, we repeat nothing, on which all of us—the whole human race—are united. And don't we tolerate one another in all those aspects of life? We do. Then why not in Religion? But that in no case means that we should become indifferent to our own religion or to those of the others. That cannot serve the purpose, rather it will do us harm. The only way left open to us is that we shou.d study our religion and the religions of others and then compare them. Anybody who shirks the study of his own religion is a faithless man ; any one who dislikes the study of another man's religion is a hypocrite. We, with the grace of God, are none

of the two. We study our own religion and we also study the religions of others and that puts us on a firm ground of faith.

The Anglicans have decided to expose the weakness of Islam. We have made a suggestion which has appeared in the Daily Press in the following words :

"Maulvi Naseem Saifi, the Chief Ahmadiyya Missionary in West Africa, commenting on the Lagos Anglican Synod's recent resolutions on Islam, has suggested a public debate between the Anglicans and Muslims on 'Which religion is suitable for mankind—Islam or Christianity'or on any other subject which Anglicans think would help the public. His suggestion is in response to the Anglican proposal to hold weekly parochial meetings on "The weakness of Islam."

Whether our suggestion will be acceptable to the Anglicans or not, it is quite premature to say anything about it. If they are really anxious that the public should know the truth about the two religions—Islam and Christianity—and that the people must have the courage of their convictions, we feel the Anglicans must accept our suggestion. But whether they do or they don't we have decided to let our readers know what we think of Christianity. We have headed our editorial series as 'Weak Points of Christianity" because we intend it to be a direct reply to the decision of the Synod to 'expose the weakness of Islam'. The best thing in our opinion is to tell the people of the beauties of one's religion instead of talking of the weaknesses of others for the weaknesses of others' religions can never prove that our own is free from weaknesses or is the best. But at times, the people of the other camp have to be put in their place, more especially when they resolve to do their worst against you.

In these editorials we intend to discuss five points Those five points are : (i) Christians heve no Word of God with them i.e. the Bible (Old and New Testaments) is not revealed Word of God. (ii) The Bible contradicts itself and therefore it is not worth following. (iii) The Christian beliefs are unreasonable and repugnant to the conscience of mankind and therefore they cannot expect any reasonable allegiance from the people. They are mere mysteries and the searching heart of man cannot stick to mysteries for long. (iv) The teachings of the Christian religion are impracticable and unsuitable for mankind in this age. (v) The Christians have grossly misunderstood the prophecies contained in their Scriptures, especially those connected with the appearance of a Comforter and the second Advent of Jesus. And herein they have been misguided by their learned theologians.

We believe that these are the main weaknesses of Christian religion. Christianity cannot come out of them and therefore according to the prophecies contained in the Holy Quran, Islam must prevail over it, as it also must prevail over all other religions

We now take up these five points one by one.

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As we have been told in the Bible, man has been created in the image of God. We are sure it means that man has been created such that he can acquire the hue of God if he so desires. The Holy Quran made this point more clearly when it said that we should acquire the hue of God and added that the best hue to be acquired is that of God. That being the case, man has been endowed with an inherent desire of seeking after God. He cannot satisfy himself with anything else, except that he is

under the misapprehension that what ever he has acquired is either God or a representative of God. That is how some people seek God in idols whether human or made of stone, wood or mud. But at the back of their conscience is a search for the real God. Even those who apparently believe in gods more than one, do assert that ultimately multiplicity of their gods merges into one Supreme God. When the Christians are told that they believe in three Gods, they try their best to come out of this dilemma and to prove that these three ultimately merage themselves into one. They do not know it is a mere delusion and that no multiplicity of gods can lead a man to One Supreme Being who is really the Creator and the Master of this Universe. However, all this goes to show that man by nature seeks after God.

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One of the ways in which God manifests Himself is through revelation. He speaks to men—chosen men—and the words that He speaks go a long way in giving satisfaction to the seeker after Him. These words are preserved for the generations to come in a book which is known as the Book of that particular religion. Any religion that does not possess the words of God cannot satisfy its followers for long time. The Christians lack this satisfying factor and therefore the leakage from their ranks. In this age when the beauties of the Holy Quran were to be manifested at the hands of the Promised Messiah, peace be on him, the Christians were to feel the absence of the word of God more than ever before. Ofcourse, one might point to the Old and New Testament and say 'well, they are the words of God'. But gone are the days when the deluded people actually used to take these books as the words of God. Nobody believes it now, not even the Christians. They know that a book that can be changed every now and then and every edition of which differs from the other, cannot stand the test of a Book of God. They have, therefore, discarded the idea of Bible being the Word of God. They do not believe it to be even an inspiration. Says the Peake's Commentary on the Bible (P3) "It is not the fact of inspiration, however, that is in dispute, but its character and method. How far, for instance, are we to attribute inspiration to the form as well as the substance of Scripture? Christian thinkers have not been agreed on this point. Some have boldly affirmed the 'mechanical' or dictation' theory or verbal inspiration, which means that every word in the Bible represents the mind of God as perfectly as though He had written it Himself, the actual author being not so much the 'pen-man' as the 'pen' of the Holy Spirit. This idea is really self-contradictory, for, there can be no question of inspiration if the writer is the mere mechanical insturment of Divinity. It is also quite incompatible with the facts presented by the Bible itself. The various books, and many portions of certain books, are written in a style so varied and as to suggest irresistably the personal idiosyncrasies of different writers." Again, "In view of these unquestionable facts, it is futile to affirm any longer the verbally inspired character of the Bible, and those who would save their faces by suggesticg this of the lost original text, are doing small honour to the Holy Spirit, for, if it was worthwhile working a miracle to produce such text, why was not such a miracle wrought to preserve it from corruption". That is where the Holy Quran remarkably excels the Bible. For, in case of the Holy Quran a miracle has actually been wrought to presevre it. By the way, we must make mention here of the fact that the original text

of the Bible has been lost altogether. We are told in the Peake's Commentary'...we have no final and unquestionable text of Holy Scripture to which we can turn as the original version. The original manuscripts have long since perished'. The result of this loss of the original manuscripts is, in the words of Peake's Commentary, "In view of all these facts it is no longer possible to insist on the literal accuracy of the gospel narratives....."

The soul of man which seeks after God and craves for the Words of His Creator gets disgusted with the Bible (Old and New Testaments) and runs to different directions. If while running like this it comes across the Holy Quran it is bound to get contentment. That is how a large number of the Christians are joining the fold of Islam.

So, that is the first weak point of Christianity : it has no WORD OF GOD to present it to its followers. Can the Anglicans provide this need of its members ? They can never.

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The second weak point of Christianity is that the Bible contradicts itself and gives an inconsistent story of the Founder of that religion. We personally believe that if Christians did not have the word of God a consistent book, written by a good author, could have been a tolerable substitute for them. But the pity of it is that the Bible is written by such a large number of people that it is bound to present an incoherent description of events, which it actually does, Moreover, the book not being able to create confidence in the hearts of its believers has always remained liable to changes even at the hands of as common a class of people as that of the copyists who handled it in the early days. Of course, now the same fate befalls it at the hands of those who cover themselves under the high sounding words like Revision.

We are told in the Peake's Commentary on the Bible : "In certain cases we have two versions of similar sayings in one and the same gospel without being literally identical. In some very important passages it is impossible to harmonise the versions. This is particularly true of the stories of the Virgin Birth and of the Resurrection. As regards the Birth stories in Matthew and we find ourselves in doubt on many Luke poitns, and there is reason to believe that a reverent imagination has been at work on traditional material . In view of all these facts it is no longer possible to insist on the literal accuracy of the gospel narratives."

We are told by Sir Frederic Kenyon in his book 'The Story of the Bible', "Copyists were not always very particular about exact accuracy and editors deliberately altered what they thought was either erroneous or obscure ; it results that no two manuscripts are very exactly alike." Again, "Now the Septuagent differs in many, and often not unimportant, details from the Hebrew Text. Throughout there are additions and sometimes omissions and often variety of phrasing."

How it has differed from one version to the other is yet another story. We need not go into the far past. The recent authentic changes would interest the reader quite as much as those of the olden days. And for that we refer to the Revised Standard Version published in America under the auspices of some of the greatest scholars of the Bible. It is indeed a ruthless attempt to purge the Bible of all the dross that had crept into it. It has thrown out the word 'virgin' from the prophecy which has all along formed a part of the 'conclusive' proof of the divinity of Jesus ; it has now substituted the word 'young'. Mr. C. J. Cadaux who was sometime the Mackennel Professor of Church History at Mansfield College

also repudiates the Christian belief of virgin birth. Says he in his 'The Life Of Jesus', "Towards the end of the century A. D, it came to be widely believed by Christians that at the time of birth his mother was still a virgin, who bore him by the miraculous intervention of God. The view, however, though dear to many modern Christians for its doctrinal value, is unlikely to be true in point of fact."

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Coming back to the Revised Standard Version, it has also thrown out the main text of the last twelve verses of Saint Mark's Gospel which deal with the ascension of Jesus. Another reference to the 'ascension' of Jesus which was found in the Gospel according to St. Luke has also been discarded. Verse 51 of Chapter 24 now reads 'While he blessed them, he parted from them.' Previously it read as follows: "And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them and carried up into heaven." The instances of the verses which have now been removed can be multiplied to any number.

As for the Bible contradicting itself, we need not go to various editions. Take any of them and study the four accounts of the life of Jesus—the four Gospels. You will find that on almost every important point the writers of these Gospels differ and contradict one another. How was Jesus arrested, how was he taken to the place where he was crucified, what happened to him there, what did he say on the cross, who put the crown of thorns on his head, what was written on the crown, what natural phenomenon marked the crucifixion, all these points are quite important to the story of Jesus and in all these points the Gospel writers differ from one another. Where the first three Gospels agree, you will find them differing from the Johanine description. Then we move to the Resurrection details. There also we meet a very incoherent story. Who went to the sepulchre first, what did he or she see there, what was he or she told, what message was given by Jesus and where did he meet his disciples? All these things, our readers will agree with us, are important for the Resurrection story. But all these points are described differently in the Gospels. These differences leave a man nowhere.

That of course was the case with the four Gospels which have been the source of Christian information all along. Now another Gospel is said to have been discovered. Some years ago, Sir Frederic Kenyon said, "Still more recently, has come the discovery of some fragments of a new Gospel different from the four which we know." And now some of the Christian scholars are fighting against the mishap—this discovery cannot be termed better than calling it a mishap. Only recently a news was carried by the Herald-Catholic weekly published from Lagos—to the effect that a certain biblical scholar at the Catholic University of America has discountenanced the claims that another collection of 'Sayings of Jesus' are 'the lost Fifth Gospel'. He is reported to have called it an insult to Christians. But call it anything you like, it will remain a fact that Christendom has all along been wrong in thinking that there are only four 'genuine' gospels.

In short, the Bible contradicts itself and presents a very inconsistent story which is not worthy of becoming the foundation of faith. That is the second weak point of Christianity. In the absence of the Word of God, if the Christians had a reliable description of the events connected with their Founder, they might have been much better than what they are now and in this age of reason they might have been able to satisfy at least some of their adherents who are now joining the fold of Islam.